

**GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM STATEMENT
ON AMENDMENT 17 - MULTI-YEAR MANAGEMENT**

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) received an update on Amendment 17 at its October meeting from Yvonne deReynier, National Marine Fisheries Service. With regard to the multi-year management cycle, the GMT prefers Alternative 3, a three-meeting biennial process with a January 1 start date for the fishing year and statistical year. This alternative does not use the most current science for the development of management measures, but it does provide for consistency with historic management practices as it reflects the status quo fishing period. This consistency allows fishery managers to compare current statistics with historical data.

The GMT is aware of the desire of industry to maintain a January 1 start date to accommodate established marketing practices. Starting the fishery later in the year (e.g., March or May) could cause additional problems as those start dates could result in inseason adjustments having to be made outside of regularly scheduled Council meetings. It is for these reasons that the GMT is proposing a mid-process "best available science" check on harvest levels.

Multi-year Management Timeline (Alternative 3, Amendment 17)							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Survey	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Assessment		A		A-C*		A-E	
Management			A		A-C		A-E
Fishing				A	A	A-C	A-C

Assessments for fishing in Years 6-7 would be complete by October of Year 4. November Council meeting of Year 4 could allow checkpoint for Year 5 harvest levels.* This checkpoint would look at whether the new science/assessments completed in Year 4 were substantially different from harvest levels set by science/assessments from Year 2. The GMT recommends that the Council develop a process for setting trigger standards at which harvest levels for that second fishing year (Year 5) would be revised.

The GMT also believes that a three-meeting process would serve best to provide adequate time for stakeholder involvement in the decision-making process, as well as time needed to review stock assessment and/or rebuilding results, develop management measures, prepare necessary NEPA documents, and make necessary changes to documents prior to the Council taking final action.

The GMT also discussed the trade-offs associated with having a two-year optimum yield (OY) vs. two one-year OYs. The GMT recommends two one-year OYs (status quo) because of the fishing and management implications associated with overharvest in the first year of a two-year OY. If this were to occur it could severely constrain fisheries in the second year. Further, the GMT does not believe that overages should be transferred as this could result in severe fishing and management problems the following year. The GMT also recognizes that transferring underages only could increase the likelihood that cumulative OYs over the long-term will be exceeded. The GMT notes that, under the status quo, overages are accounted for when stock assessment or rebuilding analyses are updated.

PFMC
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